

Remarks

Claim 1 as set forth in the Amendment filed June 21, 2005 has now been further clarified to indicate that each step of each of the two-step intermediate heat treatments is conducted for the recited holding time. This is responsive to the Examiner's statement at the middle of page 3 of the Office Action that the claims contain no limitation to performing the two-step heat treatment for any time limitation, and thus, merely heating to a temperature, passing through to a final temperature of 1100 - 1150 °C meets the claimed limitation. The Examiner's position in this regard has now been overcome by reciting in claim 1 a time limitation to performing each two-step heat treatment. In this regard, the first sentence of the last paragraph on page 10 of the specification states:


In these intermediate heat treatment (a) to (c), the holding times at a desired temperature were all set to 30 minutes.

It is apparent that this means that each step of the two-step intermediate heat treatment is conducted for 30 minutes.

Furthermore, the holding time has been clarified to "10 minutes or longer up to about 2 hours", to avoid any possible confusion that might have been created by reciting a time of "10 minutes or longer and for about 2 hours."

Respectfully submitted,

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